Inventory of Sangamon County

Natural Areas

FINAL

For:

Friends of the Sangamon Valley
Springfield, Illinois

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APPENDICES

P r e f a c e

The Friends of the Sangamon Valley (the Friends) is a charitable membership organization formed in 1999 and dedicated to the preservation of local natural heritage by acquiring, restoring, and protecting ecologically significant lands in the Sangamon River watershed. Neither the city of Springfield nor Sangamon County has a local conservation district, forest preserve district, or other land trust organization dedicated to preserving land or restoring and maintaining natural areas. The Friends fills this niche. Initially formed to address a potential threat to a single nature preserve in Springfield, the Friends has expanded its mission to encompass the broader watershed, and has conducted ecological management and research work in three counties. The Friends' first land acquisition is currently being negotiated.

The "Becker Woods/ Waterford Place" development in Springfield was the catalyst for the Friends' inventory of Sangamon County. Becker Woods was a small woodland on the west side of Springfield, east of the historic Becker Mansion. Characterized by rolling hills, tall oaks, and including the floodplain of the Jacksonville Branch of Spring Creek, the woods were completely surrounded by urban commercial and residential development. When a developer approached the Springfield city council about developing the area, neighbors asked the city to purchase the property. The price was prohibitive. However, a neighbor had recently granted a conservation easement to a land trust based in Rockford, Illinois, and this seemed a viable option for the Woods. Springfield, in order to comply with a city ordinance prohibiting construction in the 100-year floodplain, attempted to negotiate an easement with the developer. As with a property purchase, the city would incur significant and prohibitive costs to local taxpayers (State Journal Register, 1999).

The Friends briefly considered taking responsibility for the easement if it was successfully negotiated. However, the newly-formed land trust decided such an easement would be too difficult to manage, with seven separate landowners requiring separate easement agreements for small individual parcels. After receiving no reply to inquiries from the developer of Waterford Place, the Friends did not pursue a conservation easement, nor did the city have an opportunity to consider it further. Instead, the developer formed a homeowner's association to assume the responsibility of the easement.

In discussions between the Friends and the county, the county stated that they had not been aware of the resources at Becker Woods and would have had no way of knowing unless another party provided the information (Friends, 2004). The Friends used this incident as an object lesson in natural resource protection throughout the county. Being unaware of such resources necessarily forces a reactive rather than proactive response and does not provide adequate time to strategize or negotiate preservation. **Unless the city and county are clearly aware of natural resources at risk before threats arise, those resources continue to be unprotected, unmanaged, and likely to be lost.**

In order to increase local government accountability, the Friends felt it necessary to develop a detailed inventory of natural areas within the county so local officials would be aware of natural areas, their relative quality, size and location and so be better prepared to make decisions regarding development and conservation. Such an inventory could also serve as a blueprint for land acquisition and conservation management needs.

In the time since the initial construction of the entrance road and other infrastructure for the Waterford Place subdivision, some of the old growth trees have died, and the survival of those that remain is in doubt, especially as houses are constructed in the future.

Introduction

This report presents an inventory of the natural areas of Sangamon County. "Natural areas" as the term is used in the state's Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) are those areas that provide outstanding natural values, exhibit natural features, or provide habitat to local flora and fauna (White, 1978). Natural areas as described in this report include publicly and privately owned lands that provide habitat to flora and fauna by specific design (e.g., Carpenter Park Nature Preserve or grass plantings/prairie reconstructions), or as a secondary purpose (e.g., pastures and harvested woodlots). They represent Sangamon County's natural heritage. While some natural areas classified in this report no longer represent European pre-settlement conditions, they do have restoration potential. This report does not classify all open spaces, such as urban parks, areas used primarily for recreation such as golf courses or ball fields, or areas used for continuous agricultural production. However, areas designed or used as habitat by wildlife within certain parks may be included (e.g., a prairie restoration within a city park).

The purpose of the inventory is to document the nature and extent of natural areas throughout Sangamon County. Modeled after the Illinois Department of Conservation's 1978 INAI, the Sangamon County inventory classifies natural areas according to natural community type and relative quality. County maps delineating the location and extent of each community and its quality are provided in this report.

Sangamon County Greenspaces: A Greenways & Trails Plan for Springfield & Sangamon County (1997) provides a brief description of some of the natural areas within the county, and recommended the acquisition or easement establishment for greenways in eleven areas of the county. This inventory report has attempted to group its results within these eleven areas of the *Greenspaces* plan to help facilitate use by county planners. The Friends anticipate that the inventory results and accompanying maps can be used by Springfield and Sangamon County planners to aid in planning, development, and conservation decision-making.

Section 1 of the inventory report provides a discussion of open space planning in Sangamon County and examines the current state of natural areas acquisition and conservation. Section 2 provides a detailed description of the methods used in conducting the inventory and producing the inventory maps. Section 3 provides a brief description of the INAI quality grading system used in the county inventory. Section 4 provides the results of the inventory, including community descriptions, quality ratings and acreage. Section 5 presents the findings relative to the eleven areas of the *Greenspaces* plan. Finally, the references cited in this report are presented. Detailed maps and a map by map accounting of acreage is included in the appendices.

Section 1. Open space planning in Springfield and Sangamon county

Two planning documents have set the stage for open space planning in Springfield and Sangamon County: the *Sangamon County Greenspaces* plan and Springfield Strategy 2020. These two plans have resulted in overarching planning, development, and policy considerations and were created by local planning experts and citizens. Neither document has legal standing, but both serve as the only community-based guideposts to land use planning and further development. In order to assess the relative success of these two plans and the status of local preservation and conservation efforts, the Friends desired to know how other communities in Illinois acquired and managed natural areas. This section examines natural areas and open space acquisition and management in other Illinois communities similar to Springfield in population.

Sangamon County

Established in 1821, Sangamon County includes 877 square miles and a population of 189,951 (Sangamon County, 2004). Both the public and private sector are significant employers in the county. The public sector includes federal, state, and local government employers, while the private sector is strongly represented by the health care, insurance, and communications industries. Springfield is the county's largest urban area. 84.6% of the land cover is agricultural, and 6.7% is urban. The remaining 8.8% is forest, wetland, and open water (IDNR, 1996). Though not rated as natural areas, the county includes two state-owned areas for recreation that also provide habitat: the 127-acre Sangamon River State Habitat Area (formerly known as the Sangamon County Conservation Area) and Lake Sangchris State Recreational Area. Both are primarily used for hunting. Lake Sangchris also features camping, boating, fishing, and hiking trails. The county manages the area formerly known as Driftwood Acres, a 55-acre wetland banking mitigation effort initiated to offset wetlands lost to road construction (SSCRPC, 2004a).

Greenspaces Plan

Because of the availability of matching funds from IDNR's Illinois Greenway Program, the county developed *Sangamon County Greenspaces: A Greenways & Trails Plan for Springfield & Sangamon County*, which presented a comprehensive look at Sangamon County's resources for conservation and recreation. Published in 1997 by the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC, 1997), the plan "identifies corridors for preservation and acquisition and suggests in what manner these should be developed" (SSCRPC, 1997). The plan provides a brief inventory and description of aquifers, lakes and streams, floodplains and forests. Additionally, recommendations were made for trail and greenway acquisition. Evaluated greenways were placed in three categories: 1) those to be acquired; 2) those for which easements should be required, and 3) those to be preserved through private stewardship. Six areas were recommended for direct acquisition; five areas were recommended for management through conservation easements. As of June 2004, none of these areas have been acquired and no easements have been implemented. No specific recommendations were

made for areas left to private stewardship. Yet, no support agency, community education, or resources have been developed to assist interested landowners.

The *Greenspaces* plan was never formally adopted by the city of Springfield or the county. However, the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission incorporated the trails recommendations into Springfield's comprehensive land use plan. None of the greenways recommendations were incorporated. Instead, floodplain areas were designated in the Comprehensive Plan as areas of "no development". Shortage of adequate staff, lack of established easement procedures and lack of funding has hampered the county's ability to put the *Greenspaces* recommendations into practice (SSCRPC, 2004b).

Subdivision Ordinance

In 2000, Sangamon County enacted a six month moratorium on further subdivision development in order to re-evaluate the county's current subdivision regulations. An ad hoc committee was appointed to examine the issues and make recommendations. The committee's final report made several recommendations regarding land subdivision and farm preservation, adopted by the county board in May 2001. These recommendations included "Green Provisions" which prohibited development in environmentally sensitive areas unless certain concerns could be mitigated. Sensitive areas were those areas adjacent to Lake Springfield, the proposed Hunter Lake or the Sangamon River and their tributaries, sites in or adjacent to dedicated nature preserves, wildlife corridors, greenways, stream corridors, flood plains, wooded areas and wetlands. Prohibitions against extensive cut and fill, development within a 50' easement of a stream or waterway bank, construction within the 100-year floodplain, and provisions for the protection of trees were also recommended.

The Green Provisions are meant for subdivisions only. If development occurs on property of less than five acres, the county has no mechanism other than the floodplain ordinance to address impacts to environmentally sensitive areas (SSCPC, 2004b).

City of Springfield

The city of Springfield includes 64 square miles (City of Springfield, 2004a) and a population of 112,000 (City of Springfield, 2004b). As described previously in the discussion of Sangamon County, both the public and private sector are significant employers in Springfield. Springfield is predominantly urban; the percentage of built up lands and open space are not directly available (SSCPC, 2004b). Natural areas within Springfield are few. The highest quality area is Carpenter Park, a state dedicated nature preserve. Gurgen Park, adjacent to Carpenter Park serves as a buffer for the preserve and shares many of its features. Other parks, such as Riverside, Washington and Lincoln Parks, are managed for recreational use including roads, bike trails, tennis courts, lawns and other amenities, though some natural areas do exist within these parks. All Springfield parks are recreation-oriented, providing the needed open space for Park District activities and the public.

Springfield Strategy 2020

In 1999, Springfield Mayor Karen Hasara announced a new city initiative, Springfield Strategy 2020. This was intended as a "visioning" process, whereby a strategic plan would be

developed to address a variety of development issues throughout the city over the next 20 years. An Environmental Strategy Group was convened to address environmental goals. The eight-member committee presented its final report in November 2001, *A Guide to the Future of Springfield's Environment: Strategy 2020, Report of the Environmental Strategy Group*. Of the five goals presented by the group, the fourth goal directly addressed parks, greenways, and natural habitats: "Springfield must preserve and manage parks, greenways and natural habitat to enhance the city's biodiversity" (Springfield Strategy 2020, 2001).

Several strategies were presented to preserve and manage the city's biodiversity, including identification and evaluation of Springfield's natural resources, and acquisition and protection of natural areas. Specific actions were suggested to achieve the strategies and goals, including a recommendation to conduct a comprehensive inventory of the city's natural resources.

Springfield Strategy 2020 primarily suggests policies and strategies to be taken into account when making land use decisions. While incorporated by reference into Springfield's comprehensive land use plan, there is no legal authority or mandate to follow the Strategy 2020 policies. Even though no specific support from the city has been provided to implement these actions or achieve these goals, several of the recommended actions are underway through the work of the Friends (see Table 1 at the end of this section).

Natural Areas Acquisition and Management

Both the *Greenspaces* and Strategy 2020 plans include laudable goals and practical recommendations for natural area acquisition and management. However, neither the county nor city is implementing the recommendations. The Friends are implementing many of the recommendations included in the Strategy 2020 plan, but this has occurred in the fulfillment of the Friends' mission and not as an explicit deliberate partnership with the city. In an attempt to determine what factors may be affecting such implementation, the Friends surveyed other Illinois communities with similar population to Springfield for information regarding their means of natural area acquisition and management. Community and county officials involved in parks, recreation, and planning were asked to describe the mechanisms used to acquire natural areas and the level of staffing to support parks and conservation areas. Table 2, at the end of this section, presents the results of the survey.

All of the communities have a park district (PD) or recreation department, which is generally focused on the immediate community, including a municipality or portions of more than one municipality. The services they provide are primarily recreational, emphasizing urban or developed parks, sports programs, and other structured activities. Most of the communities' respective counties have Forest Preserve Districts (FPDs) or Conservation Districts (CDs). It is the forest preserve districts and conservation districts that acquire and maintain natural areas and conservation property, including environmental education programs and activities that emphasize natural areas ecology or interacting with nature. All of the communities/counties had forest preserve districts or conservation districts, except Springfield/Sangamon County, Peoria/Peoria County, and Bloomington-Normal/McLean County.

In Table 2, "Environmental Management Staff" refers to those staff whose primary purpose is to provide ongoing ecological management and maintenance to the communities' parks, open spaces and natural areas. "Environmental Education Staff" are those staff involved in providing educational services to the general public. All the communities, except

Springfield/Sangamon County retained some full and/or part time environmental management staff (information from Bloomington/McLean County was not available). However, Springfield does employ environmental education staff associated with its botanical garden and zoo. A small component of Springfield's park district staff are available on an as-needed basis to conduct maintenance, such as trail repair or tree removal, in Carpenter and Gurgens Parks.

Funding sources for natural areas acquisition and maintenance include property taxes, referenda and non-referenda bonds, grants, and donations. Of the communities contacted, Springfield is the only community that relies solely on grants from the state for open space acquisition. This funding source is not without drawbacks however, in that the requirement for matching funds is often prohibitive. This is likely why Springfield has only rarely accessed these grants and is primarily why McLean County relies only on gifts or donations (McLean County, 2004). The Peoria PD is unique in that its strong natural areas acquisition program does not rely on taxes or bonds, but has benefited from a few individuals who have sold property to the park district in return for tax incentives. Foundations also provide funding and other support for land acquisition, education, and resources. Most of the forest preserve districts and park districts are associated with local foundations. In contrast, the Springfield Parks Foundation supports the Springfield park district's educational, developmental, and rehabilitation projects (SPF, 2004), but does not appear to include consideration for natural areas acquisition or ecological management.

The holdings listed in Table 2 are the holdings in acres of the respective PD, FPD or CD. Generally, park district holdings will include developed parks and facilities not considered natural areas, though some natural areas are included. In contrast, the holdings indicated for forest preserve districts or conservation districts would tend to include mostly natural areas, though some developed acres are likely included. The entries for Peoria and Springfield PDs include two numbers; the first represents total park district holdings and the second represents natural areas within the respective park district system.

Many of the communities listed in Table 2 occur in the collar counties of Chicago. Based on the vastly increased tax base and population available, it is not surprising there are differences between the Chicago area and Rockford communities and Springfield/Sangamon County or others in central Illinois. However, consideration of the communities outside the collar counties, Bloomington, Champaign, Decatur, Peoria, and Springfield, still reveal some differences.

Bloomington-Normal/McLean County appears to be the area with the fewest holdings, however this assessment does not take into account the area's non-profit corporation, The ParkLands Foundation, dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and maintenance of natural lands (ParkLands Foundation, 2004) throughout the area. Including the 1600 acres of natural areas in McLean and Woodford counties owned and/or maintained by the foundation (ParkLands Foundation, 2004), natural areas holdings in and around McLean County approach those of Decatur/Macon County and Champaign/Champaign County. Champaign/Champaign County is similar to Springfield/Sangamon County in population, yet its holdings are greater. Property taxes fund land acquisition in Champaign, and this may account for the difference.

Of the communities listed, Peoria/Peoria County is most like Springfield/Sangamon County in population and funding sources. Both communities have used state or federal grant programs to acquire natural areas property. Yet, there are significant differences in natural areas holdings and support staff. The Peoria PD's boundaries encompass 57 square miles in Peoria County, with parks and open space holdings of approximately 8,600 acres, of which over 4,100 acres are natural areas (PPD, 2004). No staff numbers were available for Peoria, but the Peoria

PD includes a Forest and Conservation Department and nature center dedicated to ecological management and education. In comparison, Springfield Park District's boundaries encompass about 60 square miles, about the same as Peoria's, yet includes total holdings of only approximately 2,400 acres, of which over 1,300 acres are natural areas (SPD, 2004) or about 1/3 the acreage of Peoria. The Springfield PD has no staff whose primary purpose is to provide ecological management or stewardship services. The Peoria PD, like many forest preserve districts, is supported by a foundation that assists in land acquisition and maintenance. Springfield and Sangamon County have no similar outside sources to support or initiate efforts in land preservation.

Sangamon County and the City of Springfield have recognized the need for preserving open space for a variety of purposes. The *Greenspaces Plan* took initial steps toward documenting valuable open space and natural areas. Community based efforts, such as Springfield Strategy 2020 have helped bring the need for natural areas into focus, with a citizens' committee providing specific achievable recommendations. Yet, neither Sangamon County nor Springfield has been able to implement the recommendations or incorporate the information they do have into a comprehensive and active force for natural areas preservation. Similar communities in central Illinois have significantly larger holdings of open space and/or natural areas and support such areas with the appropriate staffing and funding resources. Yet, neither Sangamon County nor Springfield have any immediate plans to address additional acquisition or provide for the management, research or continued health of their current natural areas holdings.

Clearly, Springfield and Sangamon County need a permanent funding source or other funding sources besides state grants, and should foster strong partnerships with other organizations such as the Friends if additional property is to be acquired and currently owned property is to receive the care it needs. Other communities have used referenda, bonds and property taxes, offered tax incentives, actively pursued grants, actively courted gifts and donations, and have partnered with foundations to acquire and manage land. Sangamon County and Springfield can draw on examples from several other central Illinois communities to evaluate these options.

Though not examined in this report, the Friends recommend that an independent agency or group provides management and oversight for city-owned natural areas. Currently, the city council oversees land use, zoning, and development. Such council decisions are subject to the political process, which does not always reflect the best interests of the natural resources.

The Friends present this inventory of natural areas in hopes that it provides a tool for education, prioritizing, and accountability. It directly addresses Strategy #1 as stated in the Strategy 2020 Group on the Environment report and provides a valid basis for future natural areas planning.

Table 1. Springfield Strategy 2020 Recommendations Conducted by the Friends of the Sangamon Valley

Strategy[a]	Action[a]	Friends Activities
Strategy #1: Identify Springfield's natural resources and biodiversity and evaluate their quality.	a. Perform a comprehensive inventory of Springfield's natural resource areas, both land and water, including an assessment of their habitat and biodiversity values	C2000 grant to conduct inventory is ongoing
	c. Identify Springfield's especially rare and high quality natural resource areas on both public and private land	Will be completed as part of inventory
Strategy #3: Establish and restructure existing institutions to effectively and efficiently acquire and develop, as well as properly managed parks, natural areas and greenways.	c. Form a private or quasi-public land trust to accept donations of conservation easements and development rights from private landowners	Friends are a private 105 (c)(3) land trust, able to accept land donations or easements
Strategy #6: Educate all segments of the community in their role in the stewardship of natural resources and biodiversity.	a. Provide information on Springfield natural resources to the public and all community landowners and managers through the Internet, library system and publications summarizing the results of Springfield's resource inventory	The Friends' web site is planned to be operating in 2004; will provide information on area natural resources
Strategy #7: Establish partnerships to enhance natural resources and biodiversity.	c. Form friends groups and volunteer organizations to assist in the management of parks, streetscapes and open spaces	The Friends are actively involved in management activities and sustain a volunteer work force of ~25 members.

Notes:

a. Strategies and actions taken from Springfield Strategy 2020. *A Guide to the Future of Springfield's Environment: Report of the Strategy Group on the Environment, Springfield Strategy 2020*, November 2001.

Table 2. Conservation and Open Space Resources in Illinois Communities of Similar Population Size to Springfield[1]

Community County	Population[2]	PD/FPD/CD	Environmental Management Staff	Environmental Education Staff	Source of funds	Holdings[6] (acres)
Aurora Kane	142,990 443,041	Fox Valley PD, Kane County FPD	FPD: 40 PT and 6 FT[3]	Several staffed nature centers	Kane Co.: Bonds, grants-$114 million	FPD: 13,500 +
Bloomington-Normal McLean	114, 495 154,453	Bloomington Parks & Rec. Dept. McLean Co. Parks & Rec. Dept.	Information not available	Information not available	McLean Co.: gifts and donations	B'ton: 982 McLean: 2,250
Champaign-Urbana Champaign	105,000 183,159	Champaign PD Champaign Co. FPD	FPD: 3 FT	FPD: 2 FT	Property tax	 FPD: 3,500 +
Decatur Macon	81,860 112,013	Decatur PD Macon Co. CD	Decatur PD: none Macon CD: 7 FT, plus seasonal	Decatur PD: none Macon CD: 6 FT	Macon CD: Personal & corporate property tax, OSLAD[4] grants; gifts, donations	PD: 2,200 FPD: 3,200 +
Elgin Kane	94,487 443,041	Elgin Parks & Rec. Kane Co. FPD	FPD: 40 PT and 6 FT	FPD: Several staffed nature centers	Kane Co.: Bonds, grants-$114 million	 FPD: 13,500 +
Joliet Will	106,221 559,861	Joliet PD Will Co. FPD	PD: None FPD: 8	PD: 35 FPD: 8	FPD: Bonds-$70 million; foundation	 FPD: 15,000 +
Naperville DuPage	128,358 924,589	Naperville PD DuPage Co. FPD	FPD: Natural Resources Dept. & Landscape Arch. Dept.	FPD: Several naturalists that run hundreds of annual programs	DuPage Co.: $145 million in bonds & non-referendum bonds; taxes	PD: 2,300 FPD: 24,000 +
Peoria Peoria	112,936 182,362	Peoria PD	Peoria PD- Forest & Conservation Dept.	Environmental Education Staff	OSLAD, LAWCON[5] grants; private gifts	PD: ~8,600 4,126
Rockford Winnebago	150,000 282,627	Rockford PD Winnebago FPD	PD: 1 FT, horticulturist FPD: 3	PD: Several staff at 2 outdoor education centers FPD: none; rely on partnerships	PD: Bonds, grants FPD: Bonds	PD: 4,356 FPD: 8,922
Springfield Sangamon	111,454 190,630	Springfield PD	None	Botanic Garden horticulturists and Zoo educational programs	OSLAD and LAWCON grants	PD: 2,433 1,364
Waukegan Lake	87,901 674,850	Waukegan PD Lake Co. FPD	Planning, Conserv. & Dept.-- 25 staff	Environmental Education. Dept.	Bonds - $120 million	 FPD: 24,773

Notes:

1. Information in this table was compiled winter/spring 2004 from interviews with city and county officials and from official websites.
2. County population taken from 2002 US census figures, at http://quickfacts.census.gov
3. PT = part time; FT = full time
4. OSLAD, or Open Space Land Acquisition and Development program. The OSLAD program is a state-financed grant program that provides funding assistance to local government agencies for acquisition and/or development of land for public parks and open space (IDNR, 2004).
5. LAWCON (or LWCF), or Land & Water Conservation Fund program. This program is similar to OSLAD in its objectives, but is funded by the federal government (IDNR, 2004).
6. Acres listed as PD are associated with park districts and are primarily developed parks, though some natural areas may be included. Acres listed as FPD are associated with forest preserve districts and may be considered primarily natural areas, but do include some developed areas. Since Peoria and Springfield only have PDs, the first number includes all PD holdings, and the second number represents acreage of natural areas.

Section 2. Sangamon County Inventory Methods

The Sangamon County Inventory was conducted by LaGesse and Associates, a Springfield-based ecological management and research consultant. Using aerial photographs, 7.5-minute topographic maps, Sidwell maps, and previous knowledge about the area, the survey team crossed the county delineating natural communities and assessing community quality. This section describes the methods used to delineate natural areas within the county.

309 Sangamon County Sidwell maps, created from an April 20th, 2001 flyover of the county were used for the initial assessment of natural communities. These maps are routinely used by the county for zoning, taxing, and planning purposes. The maps are 24 x 36 inches and depict a black and white aerial photograph of two sections (1 mile by 2 miles), with property lines and tax parcel numbers. A total of 618 maps were obtained; two copies of each map. Sangamon County contributed 500 maps; the Friends purchased the rest. Two copies of each map were used; one set was used in the field to record notes and observations, the other set was used for the final community delineation.

Basic aerial photo interpretation helped provide a general overview of the county. Because the photos on the Sidwell maps had been taken in mid-April, it was evident that silver maples and willows had leafed out; whereas the hardwood trees, such as various oaks and hickories had not. This provided some ability to select areas for more detailed evaluation.

The next step involved a windshield survey of selected properties. This phase was conducted throughout the duration of the project and allowed a rapid, unobtrusive general survey of an area. In many instances, the windshield survey was adequate to document the type of community, its quality and extent, and if any changes had occurred since the Sidwell maps were printed.

The windshield survey and aerial photo review allowed the survey team to focus on those lands that required a more detailed survey and ground truthing. The survey team gained landowner permission to survey the property on foot, or in some cases, via canoe. Landowner access was gained through direct phone calls, speaking to the landowner at their residence, or through letters. LaGesse and Associates represented the Friends of the Sangamon Valley in this effort, and it appears that many landowners granted access because the Friends did not represent a government agency. Only three landowners did not grant access. Their properties were of sufficiently small size that they could be evaluated from adjacent properties.

From May 2002 through November 2003, the survey team traveled to each site selected for a detailed evaluation. A copy of each Sidwell map was used to record notes during the walking and driving surveys. Relevant notes included information regarding the community present and its extent or bounds, species present and dominant species. No formal quantitative vegetative surveys were conducted. The communities were assessed visually, using the maps, topography and changes in vegetation to determine community extent. Species present and dominant species were determined by visual observation. For higher quality sites, some cursory species lists were generated, noting trees, shrubs, and forbs. The grade of each community was assessed by visual observations of relative disturbance and presence of non-native species.

The Friends had suggested creating a geographic information system (GIS), but after meeting with city and county planners, outlining areas on Sidwell maps was chosen as the preferred format. The planners use Sidwell maps extensively, and it was agreed that this method would allow the information to be readily available to the planners. Therefore, field notes and

community delineations were transferred to the second copy of each map and areas were outlined in permanent black marker, with labels affixed denoting community type and quality. Acreage of each delineated community was then measured with a Placom digital planimeter (model KP-92N). In order to maintain consistency and minimize error, one team member transferred all field notes to the final maps and one team member performed all planimetry.

Acreages of each community and grade were entered into an Excel spreadsheet on a per map basis. The detailed per map spreadsheets are included in this report so evaluations can be made on scales from county-wide to section-wide.

Section 3. IDNR Natural Area Classification Grading System

The natural areas inventory was a three-year effort, concluded in 1978, to "find, evaluate, describe, and classify natural areas…" (White, 1978) in Illinois. Through map and aerial photo review, aerial surveys, and ground truthing, the inventory determined community types, quantity, and quality of the state's remaining natural areas. The INAI established grades to represent the quality of natural areas, indicating the relative degree of disturbance. The INAI discovered 1,089 high quality natural areas in the state, totaling 25,723 acres. This represented about seven-hundredths of 1% of Illinois' land and water. Nine community classes were devised based on the *Natural Divisions of Illinois* (Schwegman, et al., 1973). These community classes were: forest, prairie, savanna, wetland, lake and pond, stream, primary, cave, and cultural. From these community classes, natural communities were categorized, including numerous subclasses and types differentiated by substrate, moisture regime and characteristic species. This Sangamon County inventory used the IDNR's natural areas quality grade scale to convey the quality of each individual parcel evaluated. In order to aid in understanding the inventory's results, this section provides a brief overview of the INAI's grading system.

A system of letter grades was developed to express degrees of natural quality, based on the relative degree of disturbance within that community. Other factors such as the presence of endangered species were not considered when determining natural quality. Although other factors are important for determining the overall preservation value of a natural area, the natural quality described is that of the degree of disturbance. The grading system provides terms for describing the relative amount of successional instability or change in the community's natural diversity, species composition and structure due to disturbance (White, 1978).

The grades are:

Grade A: relatively stable or undisturbed communities

Grade B: late successional or lightly disturbed communities

Grade C: mid-successional or moderately to heavily disturbed communities

Grade D: early successional or severely disturbed communities

Grade E: very early successional or very severely disturbed communities

A grade A community has a structure and composition that has reached stability and does not show the effects of disturbance by humans. However, this grade does include a range of conditions: the community may be gradually changing, or it may have been lightly disturbed. Examples include: prairie with undisturbed soil and natural plant species composition; wetland with unpolluted water, unaltered water level and natural vegetation; or an ungrazed, old growth forest (White, 1978).

A grade B community is a former grade A community that has recently been lightly disturbed, or has been moderately to heavily disturbed in the past, but has recovered

significantly. If the community was recently disturbed, it was not disturbed so heavily that the original structure and composition was destroyed. If the community was disturbed in the past, it has reverted so that it is reaching stability and is no longer rapidly changing. Examples include: old growth forest that was selectively logged five years ago; old second growth forest that had a moderate grazing effect but now is in the late recovery stage; prairie with somewhat weedy composition due to past soil grading; wetland in which original water levels have been altered, which changed species composition locally, but did not destroy the structure and natural diversity of the community (White, 1978).

A grade C community has been moderately to heavily disturbed (and may or may not be reverting) or has been severely disturbed and has reverted significantly. The disturbance to a grade C community has been so great that the original structure was destroyed, and often the composition has been changed significantly. This grade includes a broad range of degrees of disturbance and of recovery. Examples include: heavily grazed, old growth forest; young to mature second growth forest; prairie that has been grazed so long that many native species have been replaced by weeds; wetland with artificial water level that has changed the structure and composition of the vegetation (White, 1978).

A grade D community either has been severely disturbed and has not recovered significantly, or has been very severely disturbed but has begun to recover.
Examples include: recently clearcut forest; mature second growth, severely grazed forest; railroad prairie remnant with graded soil dominated by weeds; wetland that has been artificially flooded or drained, greatly changing the vegetation. Grade E is reserved for severely disturbed communities, such as cropland or pasture (White, 1978).

Section 4. Sangamon County Inventory Results

This section presents the inventory of natural communities in Sangamon County. The dominant natural flora and their associates define the communities. These areas work together as a complex mosaic and some are in dire need of protection and/or management to insure that the communities, animals and plants that they harbor will be here in the future. The natural communities described in this report generally follow those as described by IDNR in the INAI (White, 1978), but some have been modified to be county-specific. The mesic uplands are split into four separate forest communities, as described in The Nature Conservancy's *Rare Communities of the Conterminous United States-Midwest Region* (TNC, 1994).

Each community is designated with a number and name, with letter grades to designate quality. Acreage of each community and grade is provided. Community type numbers 10 and 22 are not used. No grade A communities were discovered within the entire county. Grade E was not used as in the INAI, but is represented by several other communities as described below, such as mixed timber and pasture. Specifically, community numbers 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, and 27 were not recognizable as natural communities, and it was not possible to obtain the necessary historical information about these areas to assign them a grade E. However, they are included here because they do provide habitat and could be considered restorable open space.

Sangamon County Natural Communities

1 Floodplain Forest Willow-Silver Maple

This community is dominated by Sandbar Willow (*Salix interior*) or Black Willow (*Salix nigra*) and includes Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*). This area can occur as a degraded floodplain, disturbed streambank, or a river sandbar community. This community represents 10% of floodplain forest existing in the county. During the inventory 2,152 acres of this community were documented all of which were grade C.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 2,152.0 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

2 Floodplain Forest Silver Maple-Cottonwood

This community is dominated by Silver Maple, and may also include scattered Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) and Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*). Local citizens refer to these areas as "maple thickets". This is a disturbed floodplain and represents 80% of floodplain forest in the county with a total of 17,293.2 acres. This is presently the largest community of degraded floodplain forest in the county.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 17,192.8 acres
Grade D 106.7 acres

3 Dry Upland Black Oak

This is a xeric community found on sandy soils and dominated by Black Oak (*Quercus velutina*). The county includes 3.6 acres of this community. Carpenter Park Nature Preserve has the only grade C example in the county. Grade D acreage is found on the north end of Springfield.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 1.1 acres
Grade D 2.5 acres

4 Floodplain Forest Bur Oak-Black Walnut-Sycamore

This community is the historic hardwood floodplain forest. This area is dominated by Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) followed by Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*). This is a diverse community with an understory of Spicebush (*Lindera benzoln*) and Paw Paw (*Asimina triloba*). This community is represented by only 2,128.4 acres and represents 10% of all floodplain forest in the county. The presence of disturbance or exotic species is reflected in lower grades of this community. Only two grade B occurrences of this community were documented; in the Sangamon River State Habitat Area and within Carpenter Park Nature Preserve. Seventeen grade C occurrences were documented. The grade D sites could be easily restored to higher grades if disturbances (e.g., ATVs, motorcycles, grazing) and exotic species were removed.

Grade B 235.4 acres
Grade C 338.0 acres
Grade D 1562.8 acres

5 Mesic Shrub Prairie Hazelnut-Big Bluestem

This community is a rare natural community type and occurs in only a few locations throughout Illinois. There is only one occurrence in the county. Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*) shrubs with mesic prairie grasses and forbs are dominant.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 5.6 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

6 Mesic Upland Red Oak-Sugar Maple

Mesic upland is represented by four different natural community forest types with a total of 545.2 acres. One of these is Red Oak-Sugar Maple (*Quercus rubra-Acer saccharum*) mesic forest and includes 85.3 acres or 16% of mesic forest uplands in Sangamon County. This forest type is found on north facing slopes of ravines. Five occurrences of this natural community were documented as grade C and three occurrences as grade D.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 59.8 acres
Grade D 25.5 acres

7 Dry Upland Slopes Chinquapin Oak-Bur Oak

This community exists on steep south-to-southwest facing slopes along the Sangamon River. This community is dominated by Chinquapin Oaks (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) on the upper slopes and gradually transitions to Bur Oak on the lower slopes with prairie forbs in the understory. 238.1 acres of this community were documented in 27 occurrences including 19 grade C and eight grade D.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 199.1 acres
Grade D 39.0 acres

8 Mesic Upland Chinquapin Oak-Sugar Maple

Mesic upland is represented by four different natural community forest types with a total of 545.2 acres. One of these is Chinquapin Oak-Sugar Maple mesic upland forest and includes 123.4 acres or 23% of mesic forest in Sangamon County. This natural community occurs on north to northeast facing slopes along the Sangamon River. Three occurrences of grade C and one occurrence of grade D were documented in this survey.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 118.3 acres
Grade D 5.1 acres

9 Dry Mesic Upland Black Oak-White Oak-Shagbark Hickory

The Black Oak-White Oak (*Quercus alba*)-Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*) community is the largest of the dry upland forest community types in Sangamon County and includes 3,798.8 acres. This is a very important natural community for deer and turkey in the county. The biggest threat to this community is residential development. There are two occurrences of grade B, which occur outside of Carpenter Park and the Sangamon River State Habitat Area. All other acres occur within these two preserves. There were many occurrences of grades C and D. Grade D areas have a larger non-native component and/or have been previously grazed. Introducing natural processes and implementing an exotic species control program could restore these areas successfully.

Grade B 279.4 acres
Grade C 1,200.8 acres
Grade D 2,352.0 acres

11 Mesic Upland White Oak-Red Oak

Mesic upland is represented by four different natural community forest types with a total of 545.2 acres. One of these is White Oak-Red Oak mesic upland forest and includes 334.5 acres or 61% of mesic forest in Sangamon County. This natural community is found in transition from dry-mesic uplands to floodplain forest. It occurs along upland streams and north- to-northeast facing slopes along the Sangamon River. Only two occurrences of grade B exist in the county and are within the Sangamon River State Habitat Area (3.9 acres) and Carpenter Park Nature Preserve (29.6 acres). Twelve occurrences of grade C and 16 occurrences of grade D were documented in this survey.

Grade B 33.5 acres
Grade C 171.7 acres
Grade D 129.5 acres

12 Mesic Upland White Oak-Black Walnut

Mesic upland is represented by four different natural community forest types with a total of 545.2 acres. One of these is White Oak-Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*) upland mesic forest and includes 1.8 acres or less than 1% of mesic forest in Sangamon County. The one occurrence of this natural community is within the Sangamon River State Habitat Area.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 1.8 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

13 Mixed Timber

This is the second largest community type in Sangamon County and includes 17,059.3 acres. Mixed timber exhibits a high degree of disturbance and does not correspond to any natural community. Therefore, the quality ratings given here are not considered equivalent to the ratings given to other communities in this report. In floodplain settings the dominant tree is Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthus*) or Hawthorn (*Crataegus sp.*). These areas do have some habitat and wildlife value and they could have some minor economic value (i.e., as woodlots for firewood). These areas would be considered grade E communities under IDNR's classification. Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*) or Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) dominates the grade D areas.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 12,387.7 acres
Grade D 4,733.1 acres

14 Grass Planting C-4 Grasses

This is a planted community in Sangamon County. For purposes of this report, C-4 grasses can generally be considered warm season grasses. (C-3 and C-4 grasses are differentiated by the manner in which they convert carbon to sugar.) Recently the Sangamon County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has been recommending more of these plantings through their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and filter strip programs. Most are not diverse plantings. Two excellent examples are in Loami at the Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary and the prairie restoration at Carpenter Park in Springfield. These serve a great benefit for local wildlife. As with the mixed timber community described above, the quality ratings given here are not considered equivalent to the ratings given for other communities.

Grade B 38.6 acres
Grade C 103.4 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

15 Mesic Prairie Big Bluestem-Indian Grass

This was the largest historic natural community type in Sangamon County but most occurrences have been converted to row crop production. Only 212 acres remain, restricted to roadsides and railroad rights-of-way. Consequently, the community is very susceptible to herbicide drift, salt, and compaction from mowing. Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) and/or Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) and some prairie forbs dominate this community.

Grade B 0.1 acres
Grade C 101.8 acres
Grade D 110.2 acres

16 Wet Prairie Cord Grass

This community is reduced to wet to damp ditches and along railroad rights-of-way in Sangamon County and includes 125.1 acres. Its lineal occurrences subject it to the same threats as mesic prairies. Cord Grass (*Spartina pectinata*) and prairie forbs dominate this community.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 21.1 acres
Grade D 104.0 acres

17 Hill Prairie Little Bluestem-Side Oats Grama

Only one occurrence was documented for this natural community in Sangamon County which is found more commonly in Menard and Cass counties. Three small, degraded hill prairie areas were documented from the Sangamon River State Habitat Area. These areas have been almost completely overgrown by woody saplings and shrubs, but a small grassy component was observed in 2002. Normally these areas are dominated by native grasses, particularly little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and side oats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*) and prairie forbs.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 0.0 acres
Grade D 0.3 acres

18 Slough

Sloughs are low-lying areas along the Sangamon River that hold water some time during the year. This community includes 205 acres, of which most are old oxbows created by past river channel movement. This community is overwhelmingly dominated by Silver Maple.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 205.0 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

19 Pond

There are many more ponds in the county than are documented in this survey. Ponds are outlined on Sidwell maps, but the Sangamon County SWCD should be consulted for additional information. The SWCD has engineered and designed most of the ponds in the county. These

areas do provide some habitat, serving as watering areas and providing other needs for shorebirds and waterfowl.

20 Vegetated Wetland Sedges

This community is dominated by various sedges and other wetland plants such as True Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), Blue Vervain (*Verbena hastata*) and Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*). 84.1 acres in six occurrences were documented in this survey, with four occurrences of grade C and two of grade D. Cattails appeared to be more dominant in grade D areas. No grade B communities were documented.

Grade B	0.0 acres
Grade C	6.7 acres
Grade D	18.4 acres

21 Shrub Wetland Buttonbush

This community is a wetland dominated by Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) shrubs. Only two examples of this community were documented during this survey.

Grade B	0.0 acres
Grade C	6.5 acres
Grade D	0.0 acres

23 Pasture Grassland

There is more of this community in Sangamon County than was documented in this survey. This is a converted community, dominated by Smooth Brome (*Bromus inermis*), Orchard Grass (*Dactylis glomerata*) and Timothy (*Phleum pratense*). These areas are overseen by the Sangamon County SWCD who should be consulted for more information about these plantings. Due to low biodiversity and domination of a few non-native species, these areas serve very little wildlife benefit. As with the mixed timber community described above, the quality ratings given here are not considered equivalent to the ratings given for other communities.

Grade B	0.0 acres
Grade C	275.6 acres
Grade D	0.0 acres

24 Grass Planting C-3 Grasses

This is a planted community dominated by Smooth Brome, Orchard Grass, and Timothy, planted to address soil erosion, used in Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs or are hayed for livestock feed. For purposes of this report, C-3 grasses can generally be considered cool season grasses. There are more acres of this community in the county than were documented in this inventory. The Sangamon County SWCD should be consulted for additional information regarding this landcover type. As with the mixed timber community described above, the quality ratings given here are not considered equivalent to the ratings given for other communities.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 40.3 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

25 Tree Planting

Most of these areas occur along Lake Springfield. Most species in these plantings did not occur here historically and the understory is dominated by invasive and exotic species. There is more of this community in Sangamon County than was documented in this survey. This is a converted community and such plantings are overseen by the Sangamon County SWCD who should be consulted for more information. The grade B areas are located within Lincoln Memorial Gardens and floodplain restoration areas within Carpenter and Gurgen Parks in Springfield. As with the mixed timber community described above, the quality ratings given here are not considered equivalent to the ratings given for other communities.

Grade B 131.7 acres
Grade C 321.4 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

26 Pasture Oaks

Most of these areas are dominated by White Oak but a few are dominated by Chinquapin and Bur Oaks. This is a restorable community with large Oaks already present. Recent grazing activities have removed most of the native understory and an exotic species control program will be needed to eliminate or reduce the non-native species in most cases. These areas still serve as open woodlands for savanna bird species and should be given priority in areas being considered for wildlife corridor enhancement.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 1,710.2 acres
Grade D 44.7 acres

27 Pine Planting

There is more of this community in Sangamon County than was documented in this survey. This is a planted community overseen by the Sangamon County SWCD or the IDNR forester who should be consulted for more information. These areas serve local wildlife by providing winter cover although no native pines occur in Sangamon County. As with the mixed timber community described above, the quality ratings given here are not considered equivalent to the ratings given for other communities.

Grade B 0.0 acres
Grade C 286.0 acres
Grade D 0.0 acres

Section 5. Findings Within the Greenspaces Plan Areas

This section presents the results of the inventory grouped into eleven different areas as established in the *Greenspaces* plan. Refer to the map entitled "Priority Greenways, Sangamon County" (SSCRPC, 1997) reprinted at the end of this section. Survey maps with tracts that fall within the *Greenspaces* greenways are listed below. A description of each greenway, taken verbatim from the *Greenspaces* plan, is provided in italics, followed by the corresponding inventory map numbers and tracts. In some cases, the Friends provide recommendations on a tract or regional level. The last area, entitled "Other Areas" is not derived from the *Greenspaces* plan, but includes unique or unusual areas discovered during the inventory and not included elsewhere.

Names associated with particular tracts are from the 2002 plat of Sangamon County. Current plats should be consulted for up-to-date owner information. Parcel numbers are taken from the Sidwell maps. Each tract is followed by a total acreage number, which can be used as an aid in identifying the parcel on the map. The notable natural communities for each tract are presented with the approximate acreage of the community. Depending on the particular parcel, the acreage of natural communities may not sum to the total acreage given for the entire tract.

AREA 1

Description: *Expansion of the Sangamon County Conservation area along the Sangamon River.*

The Friends recommend evaluating tracts in the north, west, and south for expansion. There are high quality dry mesic uplands to the north extending into Menard County.

Maps: **5-K, 5-L**

Expansion north and west includes:

5-K

- **J. Digiovanna Tract** **27 acres**
  - 9-C 12.7 acres
  - 2-C 6 acres
  - 4-C 1 acre

5-L

- **Melvin Mitts Tract** **40 acres**

  Sold to IDNR in 2000; site plans under development from IDNR. Includes: 26C, 9B, and old fields of undetermined acreage.

- **Harry Wells Tract** **23 acres**
  4-C 5.2 acres
  9-B 16.9 acres

  The 16.9-acre tract is an excellent example of white oak-black oak-shagbark hickory upland forest and along with the Gatschenberger tract in Area 3, is one of two grade B dry mesic uplands not protected in Sangamon County. This should be a county priority to acquire with purchases or easements.

Areas to the south could be protected with conservation easements. A diverse understory and quality floodplain hardwood forest along the unnamed tributary runs through both of the tracts described below. Expansion south includes:

- **Barbara Frey Tract** **75 acres**
  9-C 23 acres

- **Henry and Dolores Enna Trust** **30 acres**
  9-C 23.1 acres
  4-C 6.4 acres

AREA 2

Description: *Forested and floodplain areas along the Sangamon River adjacent to the CNW North proposed trail corridor.*

This is not a diverse natural community; Silver Maple dominates the entire floodplain. There are 10 owners included. This area may be more easily protected through conservation easement or private landowner stewardship.

Maps: 13-F, 14-A

13-F

- **Various landowners**
  9-D 24.6 acres
  11-D 14.4 acres

14-A

- **William Sausaman Tract** **97 acres**
  9-C 2.3 acres
  9-D 15.3 acres
  2-C 10.7 acres
  11-C 1.4 acres

- **Edward Ware Tract** **60 acres**
  9-C 2.1 acres
  6-C 13.1 acres
  2-C 8.4 acres

- **W. Wieties Tract** **20 acres**
  9-C 2.6 acres

- **Robert Schall Tract** **135.6 acres**
  18-C 2.1 acres

AREA 3

Description: *Expansion of the Carpenter/Riverside Park area West along both sides of the Sangamon River to Walnut Street.*

The corridor including these parcels contains the highest concentration of diverse natural communities in the county. These natural communities should be a high priority for the county to protect by any means possible.

Maps: 14-C, 14-D, 6-Q

14-C

- **John Gatschenberger Trust Tract** **110 acres**
  9-C 1.5 acres
  2-C 26.6 acres

- **Wanda Schmidgall Tract** **114 acres**
  2-C 31.3 acres

- **Airport Authority** **78 acres**
  2-C 18.2 acres
  9-C 23.6 acres

14-D

- **John Gatschenberger Trust Tract** **63 acres**
  9-B 32.3 acres
  2-C 27.1 acres

  Excellent example of white oak-black oak-shagbark hickory upland forest and, along with the Wells tract in Area 1, is one of two grade B dry mesic uplands not protected in Sangamon County. This should be a county priority to acquire with purchases or easements.

- **Mark Steen Tract** **72 acres**
  2-C 19.3 acres
  Restorable agricultural fields

6-Q

- **Donald Poe Tract** **154 acres**
  18-C 1.6 acres
  2-C 6.6 acres

- **Wanda Schmidgall Tract** **641 acres**
  2-C 17.8 acres
  Restorable agricultural fields

AREA 4

Description: *Expansion of the Sangamon County owned floodplain at the confluence of the Sangamon River, South Fork, and Sugar Creek.*

Maps: 15-J, 15-K, 15-P, 15-Q

15-J

- **Various landowners**
  2-C 427 acres
  18-C 36.1 acres

15-K

- **Various landowners**
  2-C 23.88 acres

15-P

- **Sangamon County** **16.9 acres**
  2-C 16.9 acres

15-Q

- **Sangamon County** **42.6 acres**
  2-C 42.3 acres

- **Trust 53-1459-6** **23 acres**
  2-C 20.4 acres

AREA 5

Description: *Floodplain/Forest along Spring Creek South of Jefferson Street.*

Maps: 13-Q, 13-R, 13-S, 14N

13-Q

- **No notable features**

13-R

- **Parcel 200-005** **40.00 acres**
  6-D 1.7 acres
  6-D 4.2 acres
  2-C 4.0 acres

- **Parcel 200-006** **17.7 acres**
  4-D 8.8 acres
  9-D 5.3 acres
  6-D 1.9 acres

13-S

- **Gavin Meyers Tract** **206 acres**
  4-D 6.6 acres
  Restorable agricultural fields

- **Kim Schlicht, et al. Tract** **74 acres**
  2-C 14.2 acres
  Restorable agricultural fields

- **Parcel 200-004** **16.1 acres**
  2-C 16.11 acres
  Restorable agricultural fields

14-N

- **Various landowners**
  2-C 90.5 acres
  9-D 14.6 acres
  1-C 7.5 acres
  11-D 6.4 acres
  4-D 3.4 acres

AREA 6

Description: *Jacksonville Branch through Springfield.*

Maps: **22-A, 22-B, 14-O**

22-A

- **Various Landowners**
  2-C 4.9 acres

22-B

- **Illini Country Club**

- **Various landowners**
  2-C 17.1 acres

14-O

- **Diocese of Springfield Tract**
  9-D 16.8 acres

- **Waterford Estates Tract**
  9-D 3.6 acres
  2-C 3.5 acres

- **Sally Robinson Tract**
  9-D 5.4 acres
  2-C 3.5 acres

- **Springfield Park District Golf Course**
  7-D 4.2 acres
  4-D 1.2 acres

- **Springfield Park District Washington Park**
  9-D 44.7 acres

AREA 7

Description: *The remainder of the Sangamon River greenway including its floodplain and associated forest areas*

Maps: 14-F, 15-A, 17-R, 17-Q, 18-G, 23-F, 23-Q, 24-D, 24-K, 30-F

14-F

- **Carter Tracts** **122.4 acres**
  9-C 13.7 acres
  9-D 5.4 acres
  2-C 36.5 acres

- **Sangamon Landfill** **152 acres**
  2-C 16.5 acres
  9-C 17.4 acres
  9-D 3.5 acres

15-A

- **Various Landowners**
  2-C 116.5 acres

9-C 33.3 acres
6-C 17.6 acres

17-Q

- **Rex Muir Jr. Tract** **134 acres**
  4-D 60.1 acres
  2-C 7.0 acres

- **Rex Muir Sr. Tract** **260 acres**
  4-D 43.4 acres
  2-C 13.1 acres

17-R

- **Ester Brock Trust** **50 acres**
  2-C 9.8 acres
  4-D 14.3 acres

18-G

- **No notable features**

23-F

- **Ronald Mauk etux Tract** **73 acres**
  9-C 12.1 acres
  7-D 4.3 acres
  2-C 116.3 acres
  9-D 6.9 acres

23-Q

- **Delmar Rentschler Tract** **40 acres**
  9-C 0.2 acres
  7-C 0.2 acres
  2-C 10.4 acres

24-B

- **Trotters MFG Inc. Tract** **103 acres**
  9-C 13.9 acres
  2-C 5.5 acres

- **James Dove, et al. Tract** **154 acres**
  18-C 1.9 acres
  2-C 95.9 acres

24-D

- **David Danials etux Tract** **208 acres**
  9-C 11.2 acres
  7-C 2.4 acres

2-C 1.9 acres

- **William Craven etux Tract** **226 acres**
  9-C 9.3 acres
  7-C 2.4 acres
  4-D 24.9 acres
  9-D 61.3 acres
  2-C 17.1 acres

24-K

- **David Danials etux Tract** **208 acres**
  9-C 19.1 acres

30-E

- **Catherine Mrasak Trust** **74 acres**
  4-D 36.6 acres

- **John Faloon, et al. Tract** **40 acres**
  11-D 3.3 acres
  9-D 9.9 acres
  2-C 8.8 acres

- **David Boyce, et al. Tract** **40 acres**
  9-D 3.1 acres
  4-D 20.2 acres

- **Charles Cousin etux Tract** **42 acres**
  9-C acres 8.7 acres
  11-D acres 11.5 acres
  4-D acres 5.7 acres

AREA 8

Description: *South Fork greenway including its floodplain and associated forested areas.*

Maps: **23-B, 23-C, 23-H, 23-O, 23-P, 15-R**

23-B

- **Sangamon County** **1 acre**
  13-C 1 acre

- **Patricia Rudolph Trust Tract** **151 acres**
  4-D 15.4 acres

- **DGR Sportsman Club Inc.Tract** **48 acres**
  2-C 21.2 acres

23-C

- **Luke Gaule etux Tract** **104 acres**
  4-D 3 acres

- **Multiple Owners**
  11-C 7.1 acres

23-H

- **Carl Moore Tract** **79 acres**
  18-C 6 acres

- **Various Landowners**
  9-C 16.3 acres
  4-C 12.5 acres

23-O

- **Mae Noll Family Tract** **241 acres**
  4-C 9.4 acres
  11-C 27.4 acres

23-P

- **Ernest Minder Tract** **190 acres**
  4-C 6.7 acres

- **Waldmire Tract** **28 acres**
  4-C 15.7 acres
  18-C 1.2 acres

15-Q

- **Janeen Braner Tract** **56 acres**
  9-D 13.3 acres
  9-D 9.4 acres
  2-C 8.1 acres

AREA 9

Description: *Lick Creek greenway near Lake Springfield.*

Maps: **21-S, 12-N, 22-O, 22-P**

21-S

- **Parcel 400-015** **42.62 acres**
  9-C 10.2 acres
  4-C 4.0 acres
  18-C 3.5 acres
  4-D 6.2 acres

2-C 14.6 acres

- **Parcel 400-014** **47.77 acres**
  4-C 5.3 acres
  9-C 1.7 acres
  2-C 33.6 acres
  18-C 0.8 acres
  4-D 5.4 acres

- **Parcel 400-011** **56.52 acres**
  4-D 2.1 acres
  6-D 4.2 acres
  9-D 14.0 acres

- **Parcel 300-004** **106.4 acres**
  2-C 85.9 acres
  11-D 2.6 acres
  9-D 2.2 acres

22-N

- **William Parr Tract**
  8-C 40.2 acres

  This tract is the only example of old growth Chinquapin Oak and Sugar Maple forest in the county. It is unusual to see Chinquapin Oak and Sugar Maple growing in association with each other. Some natural community researchers have suggested that these two species, when occurring together in a grove-like setting, may have been planted by American Indians or early settlers.

- **Various landowners**
  8-C 83.0 acres
  9-D 9.9 acres

22-O

- **CWLP**
  9-D 22.1 acres
  4-D 16.5 acres

22-P

- **CWLP Girl Scout Campground**
  8-C 15.7 acres
  9-C 2.7 acres
  9-D 3.0 acres

This tract is the best example of old growth Chinquapin Oaks in the county. The oaks that occur here are possibly the oldest in the entire county, with some estimated at over 360 years old.

AREA 10

Description: *Sugar Creek greenway near Lake Springfield.*

Maps: 29-C, 29-J

29-C

- **CWLP**
  9-C 71.0 acres
  7-C 26.1 acres
  4-C 8.4 acres
  4-D 4.7 acres

  This tract is the best example of old growth White Oaks on Lake Springfield.

29-J

- **CWLP**
  4-C 34.2 acres

- **Parcel 300-015** **97.5 acres**
  4-C 20.1 acres

AREA 11

Description: *Horse Creek greenway near Lake Springfield.*

Maps: 23-N, 30-C

23-N

- **Parcel 200-003**
  9-D 6.4 acres
  11-D 4.8

- **CWLP Tract**
  9-D 9.1 acres
  11-D 5.2 acres

30-C

- **City of Springfield**
  9-C 14.7 acres
  4-C 2.1 acres

2-C 147.2 acres
18-C 1.5 acres

OTHER AREAS

Description: *These are unique areas in the county discovered during the course of the inventory that were not included within the eleven zones of the Greenspaces plan.*

Maps: 7-G, 14-F, 14-L, 19-E, 22-M, 27-M, 30-A

7-G

- **Railroad**
  5-C 5.6 acres

  This tract is the only example of this community in the county.

14-F

- **Railroad**
  15-C 3.9 acres mesic prairie

  This tract is one of the best examples of prairie remnants in the county.

14-L

- **Railroad intersection**
  15-C 5.1 acres mesic prairie

  This tract is one of the best examples of prairie remnants in the county.

19-E

- **Old Jacksonville Road**
  9-D 25.5 acres

  This area is a private wildlife sanctuary, not affiliated with any particular wildlife or agricultural program.

22-M

- **CWLP**
  9-D 9.6 acres

  This area includes the second best example of old growth oaks in the county and occurs along Lake Springfield in close proximity to the power plant.

27-M

- **Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary**
  2-C 32 acres
  15-B 38.6 acres

15-C 43.1 acres
20-C 2.1 acres

This sanctuary is an excellent example of restored prairie, wetlands, and forest.

30-A

- **Brush Creek**

Section 6 City of Springfield
9-D 1.1 acres
4-C 19.2 acres
11-D 0.6 acres
9-D 5.2 acres
2-C 46.4 acres
Section 7 City of Springfield
9-C 4.2 acres
9-D 6.2 acres
9-D 7.3 acres
4-D 7.6 acres
2-C 106.5 acres

The Brush Creek area is largely owned by the City of Springfield and includes many natural communities. The acres of 9C in Section 7 are the only occurrences of Post Oak in the county. This area should be of high priority for the city or county to preserve by any means possible.

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